REMARKS

Claims 3-5 and 7 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 3-5 and 7 are amended. No new matter is added. Claims 1, 2, 6 and 8 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner Blair at the interview held April 9, 2007, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicants' record of the interview.

The Office Action objects to claim 4 asserting that claim 4 refers to the method claim 3 and that claim 3 is actually a system claim. To obviate this objection, claim 4 is amended to recite "the system of Claim 3." Applicants respectfully request that the objection to claim 4 be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 3-8 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention. Specifically, the Office Action asserts that claims 3-8 are vague because the term "thrask" is included. Applicants respectfully assert that the term "thrask" is defined on page 5, line 17 and page 7, lines 15 of the specification. In the thrask, a user can manually add or remove items from the thrask. Also, a user can change the name of the thrask. (page 6, lines 5-6). With respect to the element of human judgment, the specification explains on page 6, lines 17-19 that a thrask is the online structure that stands for the relations between the organization of related human tasks represented by different messages and other items. Applicants assert that it is the element of human judgment that decides whether an event is a task that has a single or multiple deadlines to be included into a thrask.

Applicants also respectfully assert that the term "thrask" is known to a person of ordinary skill in the art. Those skilled in the art have started to use the term "Thrask" subsequent to publication of a paper (Taking Email to Task: The Design and Evaluation of a Task Management Centered Email Tool, Bellotti, et al., CHI 2003 April 5-10, 2003) authored by some of the inventors. In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request that the §112 rejections be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 3-8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Gupta (U.S. 6,917,965). Specifically, the Office Action asserts that Gupta discloses all of the features of claims 3-8. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Specifically, Applicants assert that Gupta fails to disclose or suggest a system for managing and tracking information items within a first message-based system, including a thrask generating module generating a plurality of thrasks, each of the thrasks including at least one information item that is assigned a set of metadata, wherein the metadata is updated based on at least one of user input, archived data in a database, time and progress, as recited in independent claim 3 and similarly recited in claims 5 and 7.

Specifically, Applicants respectfully assert that Gupta, at col. 3, lines 1-8, merely discloses an annotation creation and notification system within an electronic mail system. One or more annotations can be created by forwarding an email thread to the annotation server. Upon receiving an email thread, the annotation server creates new annotations within all of these email messages, either individually or as a group. The title field (190) contains title information. The title is generally determined by the user and can be entered as ASCII text of as HTML code. However, Gupta fails to disclose or suggest a system for managing and tracking information items within a message-based system including information items having metadata that classifies the items into at least one of the group of a deadline, a reminder, a deferral and an obligation. Gupta merely discloses the use of a timeline which

indicates only start and end times of media files. Gupta's timeline corresponds with the start and end times of media streams and not with the priorities or events of particular information items, as featured independent claim 3 and similarly featured in claims 5 and 7.

Accordingly, Applicants assert that Gupta fails to disclose or suggest a system for managing and tracking information items within a first message-based system, including a thrask generating module generating a plurality of thrasks, each of the thrasks including at least one information item assigned a set of metadata, wherein the metadata is updated based on at least one of user input, archived data in a database, time and progress, as recited in independent claim 3 and similarly recited in claims 5 and 7.
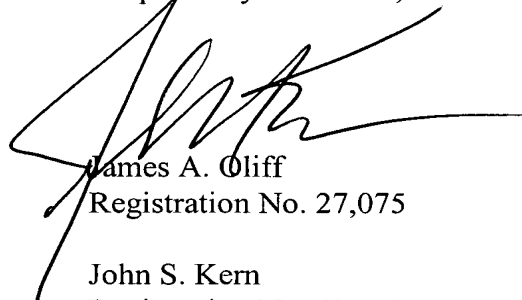
Support for such features is found, for example, at least at page 5, lines 6-11, page 30, lines 19-23, page 22, lines 16-18 and page 9, lines 3-7 of the specification. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

In accordance with the above remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 3, 5 and 7 define patentable subject matter. Claim 4 depends from claim 3, and therefore, also defines patentable subject matter, as well as for the additional features it recites.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 3-5 and 7 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

John S. Kern
Registration No. 42,719

JAO:EXC/mab

Date: April 19, 2007

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION
Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461